

ceases. That time never comes. At what period in a Christian's life should he cease to have the spirit of forgiveness? Surely such a time never comes. What Jesus here teaches, and what all of us need to learn, is that the spirit of forgiveness should never cease in the Christian life, nor should it ever turn into resentment.

2. *Reckoning*.—Here is a king who took account or made a reckoning with this servant. That is what God is always doing. He calls men to account. And if they escape such reckoning in this world, the final account will come to each one. Let no one secretly imagine that he will escape the final reckoning. All men must appear before the great Judge.

3. *He Had Not to Pay*.—What was true of that servant is true of each one of us. We can not atone for our sins. If we could it would not have been necessary for Christ to come into the world. There are those who think that by breaking away from their sins will make everything right, or they hope to get rid of sin by tears of repentance. But none of these things will atone for one's sins. The fact that you are sorry for being in debt does not cancel the obligation. The debt of sin is not only hopelessly great, but hopelessly irremovable.

4. *Forgave the Debt*.—That was the only thing left to do. The debt was too great for the man to pay, and if it was to be settled at all it must be forgiven. That is exactly the position of the sinner. There is but one thing for him to do, and that is to come in broken-hearted penitence crying to God for mercy. God alone can blot out our past sins, and all he asks is that we make humble confession of the sin, and ask his forgiveness. "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." Forgiveness is free, it requires no pay on our part; it is complete, for God at one sweep wipes out all our indebtedness. We begin the new life without any obligations so far as the past is concerned.

To Make You Think

1. What question did Peter ask and what was the occasion of it? 2. What was there wrong in this question? 3. How often were Jews taught to forgive? 4. According to Christ's teaching how often are we to forgive? 5. Did Jesus mean to teach that having forgiven seven times seventy, 490 times, we have reached the limit? 6. Are we to forgive those who do not ask forgiveness? 7. Are we to forgive those who ask forgiveness and keep on repeating the offense? 8. In the case of trouble between two brethren who is to ask forgiveness? 9. On what conditions are we forgiven? 10. Does a man who is forgiven always have the forgiving spirit? 11. If a man does not exercise the forgiving spirit does that prove that he has not been forgiven? 12. Can a Christian harbor a grudge in his bosom? 13. Has Jesus paid the debt of sin for all men? 14. Why then are not all men forgiven?

15. In this parable what does the large debt represent? 16. What does the small debt represent? 17. Who only can pray the Lord's prayer with profit? 18. To whom is this prayer a curse when uttered?

Lesson Points

1. We should forgive those who have wronged us, and not cherish resentment. Verse 21.

2. We should forgive repeatedly, not once, nor seven times, nor seventy-seven times, but as often as we are called upon in the right spirit. Verse 22.

3. We should forgive those who confess their sins and show a sincere spirit of repentance and reformation.

4. We should forgive others as God forgives us, freely, and without exacting all our rights.

5. We should forgive others because God has forgiven us, and should be like God in our forgiveness. Verse 33.

6. Our forgiveness should be sincere, hearty and full; cherishing no bitter feeling, forgetting as well as forgiving. Verse 35.

7. Unless we do forgive others, we have no right to ask God to forgive us; unforgiving, we must expect wrath. Verse 35.

For the Teachers' Meeting

1. In this parable we have a picture of salvation. (1) The Lord; (2) Our debt; (3) How it is forgiven; (4) What should be our spirit toward others; (5) When the spirit of forgiveness should cease.

2. The Question. (1) It comes to us often, for we all have complaints against others; (2) Some do as they are done by; (3) Pharisees forgave three times, better men seven times, but Jesus points to the unlimited grace of God in the seventy times seven; (4) Of these different standards of morality which is the Christian's?

3. The parable. (1) The subject illustrated by means of a story. This arouses interest, awakens thought, and helps the memory; (2) The king. He is the Lord of all, to whom every man must render an account. (3) The servant. We all owe to God more than we can pay. No one deserves salvation for his good works. There is but one way to get rid of this debt; (4) The forgiveness. This is given for the asking and complying with the conditions which are simple. Having received forgiveness, we should go out into the world, and show to others the mercy that was shown us.

Helpful Illustrations

Prayer of the unforgiving man. Let us conceive such a man praying. He says: "O God, I have sinned against thee many times. I have been often forgetful of thy goodness. I have broken thy laws. I have committed many secret sins. Deal with me, I beseech thee, O Lord, even as I deal with my neighbor. He hath not offended me one hundredth part as much as I have offended thee, but I can not forgive him. He has been very ungrateful to me, tho not an hundredth part as ungrateful as I have been to thee, yet I can

not overlook such base ingratitude. Deal with me, O Lord, as I deal with him. I remember and treasure up every little trifle which shows how ill he has behaved to me. Deal with me, O Lord, as I deal with him." Can anything be more shocking and horrible than such a prayer? Yet this is just the prayer the unforgiving man offers every time he repeats the Lord's Prayer.—*Archbishop Hare.*

Forgiveness wins a brother. A Polish novel gives an illustration of this. Chilo has betrayed an old man, Glaucus, robbed him of wife and children, and caused him to be delivered to the executioner. Nero is amusing himself with burning the Christians and Glaucus is among them. Chilo in a chariot suddenly beholds him, stanch and loyal in faith, tho suffering untold agonies. Chilo's conscience overwhelms him, his perfidy condemns him. He cries out, "Glaucus! for Christ's name, forgive me!" The head of the martyr moved slightly, and from top of the mast was heard a voice like a groan, "I forgive!" Wonderful revelation of forgiving love! Glaucus, thou hast gained thy brother, for Chilo goes straight to baptism and suffering in his loyalty to the forgiving love which to him had been given by the burning martyr.—*N. Boynton.*

Our Bible School

STUDIES IN THE LIFE OF CHRIST

Dear Reader:—Announcement was made last week of our intention to give an outline study in the life of Christ, embracing the story as recorded in the four gospels. Part of the introduction to these studies was given in last issue, taken from Bible Studies by Dr. Gregory in the *Homiletic Review*. The rest of the introduction we give below taken from the same authority. Next week will appear the first of the series of reading lessons in the gospels.

The Origin of the Gospels

In connection with His death Christ issued to His Apostles the *Great Commission*: "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature." They entered upon the work of carrying out that Commission. It embraced in its scope the *World, Jew, Roman and Greek, of that age*. The Apostles went forth preaching the gospel like common-sense men, presenting Jesus to each of these three great types or races of mankind in the way best suited to the end in view, of leading those races to submit to Him as the Divine Savior and Lord. The same presentation would not equally commend him to all these races. Each of them had its peculiarities that had to be taken into account; each of them its own characteristic views of life, of the evils in the world, and of the qualities of the needed and longed-for deliverer, of which, so far as it was right, the gospel must take advantage. Those early preachers took wise account of all this, and preached to the Jew, to the Roman, and